

## Making the Right Call Comes Easy; Hightstown Business Woman is Named SBA Young Entrepreneur of the Year

**A**manda J. Puppo has built a business on making the right call. Recently, the owner of MarketReach, Inc., a small business that specializes in qualifying appointments and sales leads for companies, was named the U.S. Small Business Administration's New Jersey 2004 Young Entrepreneur of the Year.

In 2001, at the age of 26, Puppo decided to take a risk and follow her dream of starting her own company. Three years later, her company specializes in solutions in telephone marketing, qualifying appointments and sales leads, conducting surveys, database clean-up, and introductory cold-call training for other companies.

Today, MarketReach, Inc. is approaching annual sales of \$100,000 and is on the verge of hiring its second employee. According to Puppo, she realized early on that most companies do not like to engage in effective cold-calling, a niche she was happy to develop for MarketReach, Inc. The company now has clients throughout New Jersey, as well as in Florida, California and Colorado.

"We do the cold-calling and market surveys for the client," said Puppo. "This allows our clients to spend building their business and servicing their customers. In essence we become the clients' sales force."

In making the announcement, SBA District Director James A. Kocsi said that Puppo was nominated for the award by Penni Nafus, director



**A Calling for Success** - Amanda J. Puppo, CEO of MarketReach, Inc., a Hightstown-based company that she started three years ago, at the age of 26. Amanda helps companies qualify appointments and sales leads through her telemarketing business. MarketReach also conducts market surveys, provides database clean up and conducts a course on cold-calling for its clients.

of the New Jersey Women's Business Center at the New Jersey Association of Women Business Owners in Hamilton and was selected for the award based on criteria that requires the recipient to be in business for three-years and be under the age of 30.

According to Kocsi, Puppo was also selected for the award based on her ability to **Increase Sales and Profits; Increase Number of Employees; Develop Innovative or Creative Business Practices;** as well as **Demonstrate the Potential for long-term Business Success.**

Puppo got a taste of being an entrepreneur at an early age. When in her pre-teens, she established the locally renowned Amanda Candy

Stand in a busy cul-de-sac in Long Island where she grew up.

In addition to running a successful company, Puppo volunteers as an instructor in an after school youth program for future entrepreneurs. In 2002, the students produced the locally popular Trentonopoly – a board game modeled after Monopoly, a venture that raised \$5,000. A good portion of the proceeds was contributed to the March of Dimes.

"This is a remarkable young woman," said Kocsi. "To walk away from a secure position and start her company and then accomplish so much in such a short amount of time is extraordinary. The SBA commends and recognizes Amanda Puppo for her entrepreneurial spirit and accomplishments."

According to Kocsi, Puppo was also the recipient of SBA's Regional Young Entrepreneur of the Year. Puppo competed with firms from New York State, Commonwealth of Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands. As winner of the regional award, Puppo competed for the title of SBA National Young Entrepreneur of the Year.

During National Small Business Week May 16th through May 22nd, SBA Administrator Hector V. Barreto will announce the National Small Business Person of the Year and National Young Entrepreneur of the Year.